

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00324 211658Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 /076 W
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O R 211617Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6800
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 324

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA
SUBJ: NAMIBIA - PRESS REPORTS "SOFTENED" WESTERN POSITION

THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF AN ARTICLE ON NAMIBIA WHICH APPEARED
IN THE CAPE TIMES OF FEB 21:
QUOTE: WEST WARY OF MARXIST INFLUENCE IN SWA
AUTHORATIVE SOUTH AFRICAN SOURCES YESTERDAY SAID
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA HAD LED TO A NEW APPRAISAL
OF MARXIST INFLUENCE IN SWA/NAMIBIA.
THEY SAID SIGNALS HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY PRETORIA THAT
THE WESTERN POSITION HAD SOFTENED SINCE THE NEW YORK CONFERENCE
WHICH ENDED ABRUPTLY THE WEEKEND BEFORE LAST.
THE HORN OF AFRICA, WHERE ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA ARE
AT WAR, HAS BECOME THE SCENE OF MAJRO INTERVENTION BY THE
SOVIET UNION, WITH CUBAN TROOPS ARRIVING TO STRENGTHEN THE
ETHIOPIAN ARMY.
MEANWHILE, THE DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
IT WAS LEARNT, IS FORGING AHEAD WITH PLANS TO SECURE A
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SETTLEMENT IN SWA/NAMIBIA THAT WILL INCLUDE SWAPO.
"THE REPUBLIC IS IN FULL PURSUIT OF A
SETTLEMENT," THE SOURCES AID, ADDING THAT THE FOREIGN
MINISTER, MR. R.F. BOTHA, WAS STILL DETERMINED THAT SWAPO
SHOULD TAKE PART IN ELECTIONS.
IN SPITE OF MR. BOTHA'S DEPARTURE FROM THE NEW
YORK TALKS THE DOOR WAS OPEN FOR CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS.

THERE WAS REASON TO BELIEVE, IN LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN
ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA, THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS STILL STOOD
A CHANCE.

REACTING TO SPECULATION THAT MR. BOTHA BROKE
OFF THE NEW YORK TALKS BECAUSE HE FEARED THAT SWAPO MAY HAVE
BEEN ON THE VERGE OF ACCEPTING THE WESTERN PROPOSALS, THE
SOURCES SAID THIS WAS NOT SO.

MR. BOTHA HAD BROKEN OFF THE TALKS AFTER IT
BECAME APPARENT THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD HAVE TO MAKE MAJOR
CONCESSIONS OF PRINCIPLE ON SWA/NAMIBIA. THESE INCLUDED SUCH
ITEMS AS GIVING UP WALVIS BAY AND ALLOWING THE EXTERNAL WING
OF SWAPO TO BEAR ARMS IN THE TERRITORY. THE SOURCES SAID
MR BOTHA THEN DECIDED HE WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT THE CABINET.
THE SOURCES SAID IT HAD BECOME CLEAR THAT EVENTS
ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA HAD LED TO A NEW MODERATION AND
WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE WEST TO RE-NEGOTIATE
CERTAIN ISSUES. ALL PARTIES WANTED A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT
AND THE PROSPECTS WERE MORE HOPEFUL THAN THEY HAD BEEN FOR SOME
TIME, THE SOURCES SAID.

MR. BOTHA IS CANVASSING THE VIEWS OF POLITICAL
LEADERS IN SWA/NAMIBIA ON THE SETTLEMENT ISSUE. UNQUOTE.
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